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No Gas Required - UNH Department Of Housing Buys Electric Vehicle

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DURHAM, N.H. - Truckin' around the University of New Hampshire campus has just gotten greener for the housing department. Now, at least some of the 10 to 20 trips they make daily around campus will be done using an electric vehicle.

The 2008 Miles electric truck was put into service last week.

"We had been interested in purchasing another vehicle to replace one in our fleet and wanted to try to do something that was more environmentally friendly," says Stephen Luber, UNH housing manager. "When we heard there was grant money available through the state of New Hampshire, we hopped on that bandwagon."

The truck has a top speed of 25 miles per hour and can go from zero to 20 in five seconds. It can travel upwards of 60 miles before the battery, which is good for 25,000 miles, needs recharging.

State money paid 80 percent of the \$18,985 cost. Luber likens the truck to an expanded golf cart with a truck bed on the back.

"We are always excited when we are doing something that doesn't require fossil fuels and we were very fortunate to be able to take advantage of the grant money," Luber says.

The Miles electric vehicle has zero tailpipe emissions, requires no gas and needs 90 percent less maintenance than gas-fired cars. The cost of operating an electric car is about half per mile what it costs to run a gas-engine vehicle.

In March 2008, UNH Energy and Campus Development, the University Office of Sustainability and the UNH Energy Task Force brought electric cars to campus for various departments to test drive.

The first electric vehicle was invented during the 1830s but it wasn't until 1891 that an electric engine was used successfully power a car. In 1899 and 1990, electric cars outsold all other types of cars in the United States.

The University of New Hampshire, founded in 1866, is a world-class public research university with the feel of a New England liberal arts college. A land, sea and space-grant university, UNH is the state's flagship public institution, enrolling 11,800 undergraduate and 2,400 graduate students.

A photo is available for download: http://www.unh.edu/news/cj_nr/2009/feb/truck002.jpg

